

Carol Lasch
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Appropriations – DDS

Thank you to co-chairs Senators Osten and Formica and Representative Walker for the opportunity to testify today in opposition to proposed cuts to the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) in the Governor's budget.

My name is Carol Lasch; I am a 58 year old 1199 member at a private sector agency (Whole Life), which gets its funding from DDS. I have been working in this profession for 20 years and I am only making \$15.63 per hour. These low wages force me to work two jobs just so I can afford my basic life expenses. Working two jobs like many of my sisters and brothers in the private sector prevents me from having any time to myself or my family. Making these low wages has kept me from being able to have the quality time with my family, especially my son and grandson that I deserve. The cost of living in this state continues to rise but our pay hasn't. I became a healthcare professional because I care for the individuals that I take care of everyday. I shouldn't be penalized for that by being forced to live paycheck to paycheck.

We all deserve to have a middleclass income. We have all given something back to help others including the state and we have nothing left to give back. This work leaves me with no time or money resources to meet all my commitments. These proposed budget cuts will make it even more difficult to provide the quality care that me and my co-workers want to provide. At the low wages that we are forced to work under, it is difficult to retain quality staff at the group homes I work in. Passing a budget that supports a living wage for private and public sector workers will allow all of us to provide the quality care that we want to provide for our participants and allow us to spend the quality time with our families that we deserve.